



European Minerals Day – Launch Event
Prague, 14 May 2009

Closing Remarks by **Thierry Salmona**
IMA-Europe President
On behalf of the European Minerals Day Partners



Mr Vice President of the European Commission,
Honorable Member of the European Parliament,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are coming to the end of our Launch Ceremony, which is at the same time the beginning of the many events that will be run in Europe. I'd like to warmly thank you all for your presence here which shows a strong support to our industries, represented through the following 4 associations: UEPG – the European Aggregates Association, represented here by their President, Mr Denis Mertens; CEMBUREAU – The European Cement Association – represented by their Chief Executive, Mr Jean-Marie Chandelle; EuroGeoSurveys, represented by its former Secretary General Mr Patrice Christmann, and obviously IMA-Europe, the European Industrial Minerals Association, represented by its Secretary General, Mrs Michelle Wyart-Remy and Amina Langedijk, Senior Adviser Communications who has successfully coordinated the European Minerals Day behind the scenes.

Together we represent a turnover of more than 50 billion euros sales, about 350 000 jobs, and around 29 000 sites and quarries in EUROPE. 70 percent of the European manufacturing turnovers depend on our products, and industries depending on our products represent 14% of the jobs in Europe. I would also like to mention the key role the geological surveys play in strategic planning of our extraction operations. I'd like to warmly thank my colleagues for letting me be their spokesperson here.

I'd like to have a special mention for Commissioner Verheugen, whose initiative on Raw Materials is a strong signal given by the Commission regarding the importance of our sector. I would like to thank MEP Mr Miroslav Ouzky who has also honoured us with his presence and Mr Mil, for the interesting insight in the Czech minerals industry.

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Thank you also to Sebastian Winkler for his passionate words on Biodiversity. Thanks also to Mr Sroubek and Mr Hrozek for the very interesting visits they have planned for us this afternoon. I'd like to thank Lhoist and Heidelberg Cement for their very kind hospitality, and particularly Mr Libor Prokopec and assistant Lenka Votrubova for the energy, kindness and competence they have shown in the organisation.

Mineral products are part of our day to day life. You will find them everywhere around you. Most of the time, we do not pay attention to minerals because we believe they are a given. However very often their extraction and transformation into useful products are calling for very sophisticated techniques and are improving day by day. One very important element that we want to communicate through these open door days is that the mining industries are respectful of environment and Biodiversity. Extraction is carried out by socially responsible companies, caring about communities where they are exerting their business.

A mining project nowadays has to be thought through from the opening of the mine until the mine rehabilitation, before it starts. Failure to do so would immediately create reaction that would damage the business itself. You will find many excellent case studies on the European Minerals Day website. I am not going to bore you with many examples, but I'd just would like to emphasize that starting today more than 160 operations throughout Europe will be very proud to show to the public what they are doing and how good care they take of the good things that were given to them by nature and how good care they take of their neighbourhood.

In addition another 150 operations or so follow the movement and will carry out open door operations throughout the year.

On the one hand this will improve awareness about our industry and improve our neighbourhood relationship, and on the other hand this will be an opportunity to showcase excellent examples regarding preservation of the environment, and biodiversity.

Our industries are striving to permanently innovate, and we all believe that innovation will be one way through the crisis that we currently see. We did innovate with the Social Dialogue Agreement whereby the industry committed to control and monitor the level of dust to which our workers are exposed and report it to the authorities and the unions, we are innovating again with the European minerals day, and we will continue to innovate.

To be in such a gorgeous place as Praha to launch this event is probably a symbol of the quality that the industry wants to show in managing their operations and environment. Mr Vice-President Verheugen. I'd like to thank you again for being here with us today and officially launch the European Minerals 2009 and hope that in several years from now we will all remember that day as something that belongs to the permanent effort of the industry toward improvement of quality of life and a possible new era in the relationship between the industry and authorities.